

2024-25



STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK



Contact

For questions or concerns about your child's school, contact your teacher or the school's main office.

To submit a compliment, question or issue that has not been resolved by your school, send it through [the Let's Talk system](#).

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WELCOME TO 2024-25 IN GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear GCS students and families:

Welcome to the 2024-25 school year. This handbook provides a selection of information, policies and rules that are important to all GCS students and families. Please review the document as it addresses questions you may have about grades, field trips, student assignment, health, safety and discipline. Please refer to our website at www.gcsnc.com for the most up-to-date policies and information.

Our mission is to prepare each student for college and career, and we are proud of the many achievements made by our students and staff. Family is a key part of that success, and I invite you to remain an active participant in your child's education. Together, we can achieve all that we dream for our students.

For all children,



Dr. Whitney Oakley
Superintendent

GETTING STARTED FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR

- Use [SchoolMint to enroll your child and to UPDATE YOUR PHONE and EMAIL](#). ([Click here to find your assigned school.](#))
- Use your child's GCS Student ID number to [register for transportation](#) if you are new, your student is changing schools or they previously stopped riding the bus. [Click here for more details about who needs to register for transportation.](#)
- Mark your calendar for the first day of school – **Monday, August 26** for GCS traditional schools. [Find all calendars here](#). Link the GCS calendar to your family's calendar in the app of your choice [by following the instructions here](#).
- Check to see if your school is now a [Community Eligibility school](#) offering no-cost meals for all. If not, [click here to fill out your annual meal application](#). Check out [menus on the web](#) or through the [Mobile Menu app](#)!
- Sign up for real-time tracking of your child's bus with [Here Comes the Bus](#). To get an [HCTB account](#), parents will need an active email address, the GCS school code (**87491**) and the GCS Student ID number.
- Become a Parent user of Canvas to see your child's courses and assignments. You'll need your student's help to get an "Observer" code. [Click here for instructions.](#)

- Use your child's GCS Student ID number [to create your Parent Portal account](#) to view their grades/attendance and to have progress reports sent to you automatically
- [Complete the annual application to volunteer](#) in your child's school.
- Follow GCS on your preferred social media channels for the latest news and information! COMING SOON: a NEW and IMPROVED GCS mobile app! Stay tuned for details.
 - [Facebook.com/GCSchoolsNC](https://www.facebook.com/GCSchoolsNC)
 - [Twitter/X: GCSchoolsNC](https://twitter.com/GCSchoolsNC)
 - [YouTube: GCSchoolsNC](https://www.youtube.com/GCSchoolsNC)
 - [Instagram: GCSchoolsNC](https://www.instagram.com/GCSchoolsNC)
- Sign up to receive flyers from Guilford County Schools and its partners! Go to peachjar.com and register with your email. You will only receive flyers that have been approved through the district or your child's school.
- [Bookmark your school's website](#) (click on the "Principals Directory" or on "Menu" then "Schools") to make it easy to find contact information for your teachers, principal and your child's other key supporters.
- Get a monthly newsletter from [Guilford Parent Academy](#) to be the first to know about upcoming events and get timely tips through email. To sign up for a weekly newsletter for updates from the Exceptional Children team, [click here](#).

2024-25

KEY CHANGES AND HIGHLIGHTS

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION & INCLEMENT WEATHER

Inclement weather and emergency closures will be announced via phone, email and text message through our mass notification system, through social media, on our district website and through the local media outlets. Please make sure to update your contact information so you don't miss an important message. Updates can be made:

- [Online via SchoolMint](#)
- *By contacting the Data Manager at your child's school*
- *By filling out a form at Open House*

Guilford County Schools is dedicated to promoting the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. In the event of inclement weather, the district has procedures for determining if schools should be in session or if a delay, early dismissal or closure should be issued. While following these plans and evaluating local weather reports and road closures, we use our best judgment in the interest of student and staff safety. [Click here for more information about weather and emergency safety in GCS.](#)

IMPORTANT POLICY UPDATES FOR 2024-25

The following list highlights policies & processes impacting students that have been revised for 2024-25:

- [Improved processes for addressing concerns about discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and retaliation](#)
- [New federal rules related to Title IX sex-based discrimination and harassment](#)
- [North Carolina Parents' Bill of Rights](#)

2024-25 ACADEMIC CALENDARS

Date for 2024-2025 GCS Traditional Academic Calendar	
* = no school for students	
First day!	Monday, August 26, 2024
Labor Day	Monday, September 2, 2024*
Fall Teacher Work Days	Friday, October 18, 2024* Monday, November 4, 2024* Tuesday, November 5, 2024*
Veterans' Day	Monday, November 11, 2024*
Thanksgiving	Wednesday, November 27 – Friday, November 29, 2024*
Winter Break	Monday, December 23, 2025 – Friday, January 3, 2025*
MLK Day	Monday, January 20, 2025*
Spring Teacher Work Days	Monday, January 27, 2025* Monday, February 17, 2025* Monday, March 31, 2025*
Spring Break	Monday, April 14 – Friday, April 18, 2025*
Memorial Day	Monday, May 26, 2025*
Last Day!	Wednesday, June 11, 2025*

[Click here for instructions to connect the GCS digital calendar to your preferred calendar app.](#)

For printable versions of the traditional school calendar as well as calendars for schools following the extended year or early/middle college calendars, [click here.](#)

OPEN HOUSE

The dates for open houses in August 2024 are:

- *Elementary – Thursday, August 22*
- *Middle – Wednesday, August 21*
- *High – Tuesday, August 20*

Your child's school will communicate the time to you. If you are not receiving communications from your child's school, contact the school's main office.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

Fees can be paid or money can be placed in a student's meal account in person at your child's school or [online through the K12 Payment Center](#).

- *Online payments may be made for student fees (such as athletics) and school meals.*
- *Due to the federal accounting requirements of the National School Meals Program, payments made for meals cannot be applied to student fees and charges.*
- *Any remaining balances from last year will be carried over.*
- *To request a refund of your remaining balance, send your name, address, and phone number to freeandreducedinfo@gcsnc.com.*

2025-26 CHOICE APPLICATION WINDOW

This year, the Choice Application Window is MOVING to the fall! Applications for the 2025-26 school year will be accepted from:

October 9, 2024 to November 22, 2024

Save the date for the **annual Choice Showcase** at the Greensboro Coliseum on:

October 16, 2024

Tours of choice schools and programs will happen on Tuesdays:

- *October 22, 2024*
- *October 29, 2024*
- *November 12, 2024*

Elementary and middle school families will receive choice offers on December 6, 2024.

High school families will receive your offers on January 31, 2025.

[For more information, visit the GCS Choose & Enroll website.](#)

GETTING TO SCHOOL

Did you know that GCS school buses travel over 42,000 miles daily across the 650 square miles of our county? If you are [eligible for GCS transportation](#), research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission shows riding the school bus is the safest way for children to travel to and from school.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education provides school transportation to eligible students according to state law.

- **Goals:** GCS wants to make sure all students can get to school safely and on time and teaches students to behave well on the bus.
- **Eligibility:** Students who live more than 1.5 miles from their school, have special needs, or are experiencing homelessness are eligible for transportation. Students attending a different school by choice may not be eligible. Students who live closer than 1.5 miles are expected to walk or provide their own transportation.
- **Service Parameters:** The Superintendent decides the best way to provide transportation, which could include buses driven by school employees, contracted bus services, or public transportation passes. Students can only ride their assigned bus and will be picked up and dropped off at their assigned bus stop.
- **Applications:** Parents can request bus service for their child. If a student lives within walking distance of their school, they won't receive transportation unless it's unsafe for them to walk. Exceptions due to unsafe conditions are decided by a special committee.

For more details, see [Board Policy 6300 Student Transportation Services](#).

[Click here for the Student Transportation Department website.](#)

TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS

- Families should complete the [Transportation Preference Form](#) if:
 - You are new to GCS.
 - Your family has moved or there has been a change in address for the student.
 - Your student has changed schools.

- Your student was signed-up for transportation last school year, but never rode the bus or stopped riding the bus.
- Families do not have to complete a new Transportation Preference Form if all transportation information from the previous school year (i.e., school, morning pick-up location and afternoon drop-off location) will remain the same.
- If your child attends a choice school or program outside of your attendance area, [click here for more information about what transportation may be available](#).

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Students with disabilities may have special transportation needs if they require specialized accommodations and/or equipment to travel to and from school. Transportation decisions are made at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings on an individual basis. For more information, please contact: 336-370-2323.

TRANSPORTATION CALL CENTER

Please contact the Transportation Call Center at **(888) 511-4GCS (4427)** Monday to Friday from 6:00am - 9:00pm for any of the following:

- *Late or Missing Buses*
- *Bus Driver/Bus Staff Inquiries*
- *Request Bus Information*
- *Lost and Found*

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Students who attend GCS also have the option of utilizing public transit to their high schools in High Point and Greensboro. There is no charge for students on school days for this service if they use their One Cards. Students must adhere to the rules and guidelines for public transportation.

SCHOOL MEALS

GCS School Nutrition continues to lead the way by providing the highest quality meals to our students every day. With the adoption of the 2010 Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act, the USDA has challenged school nutrition programs to raise the bar on nutrition. GCS School Nutrition continues to exceed the parameters set forth by the USDA. Students will see more fruit options at breakfast, along with yogurt and other healthy, nutritious entrees geared for kids on the go. GCS School Nutrition also makes every effort to accommodate students who need special dietary modifications for food allergies, diabetes and textural modifications.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 updated the requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. School Nutrition Services provides meals that offer whole

grains, a variety of fruits and vegetables and lean proteins. As all food items on the breakfast and lunch menus offered at GCS meet the HHFKA guidelines, students are required to have the option to choose any of the components daily.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST & LUNCH FOR 2024-25

MEAL CHARGES

Student Breakfast \$1.00

Student Lunch \$2.85

NO COST MEAL APPLICATIONS

Student Nutrition Services is urging families who need no cost meals to fill out a Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application. [Click here to complete](#) or a paper copy is available in your school. Only one form is needed per household for those students not attending a [Community Eligibility Program \(CEP\) school](#). “Community Eligibility” means that the whole school qualifies for meals at no cost. If you have a student enrolled in a CEP school, no form is required for the student(s) who attend a CEP school. If you have students enrolled in schools with both types of meal programs, one meal application for your family is needed for your student(s) who attend non-CEP schools.

This year, GCS is waiving the reduced-price status for breakfast and lunch. All students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals will receive breakfast and lunch each day at no cost.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

Money can be placed on a student’s account in person or [online through the K12 Payment Center](#). Any existing balances will be carried over to the following year.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM SCHOOL BREAKFAST

There are four (4) meal components offered at breakfast. Students are required to take a minimum of three (3) of the four (4) components including at least one (1) fruit serving (1/2 cup) to make a breakfast meal.

The four (4) components offered daily at breakfast to students in grades K-12 include a minimum of:

	Serving size	Required
<i>Milk</i>	8 oz. of 1 %, skim or flavored skim	
<i>Fruits</i>	1 serving (1/2 cup each)	Fruit required
<i>Bread/Grain or Meat/Alternate Protein</i>	1 oz. equivalent minimum	
<i>Bread/Grain</i>	1 oz. equivalent minimum	

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM SCHOOL LUNCH

There are five (5) meal components offered at lunch. Students are required to take a minimum of three (3) of the five (5) components including at least one (1) fruit serving or one (1) vegetable serving to make a lunch meal.

The five (5) components offered daily at lunch to students in grades K-12 include a minimum of:

	Serving size	Required
<i>Milk</i>	8 oz. of 1 %, skim or flavored skim	
<i>Fruits</i>	1 serving (1/2 cup each)	Fruit or vegetable required
<i>Vegetables</i>	2 servings (1/2 cup each)	Fruit or vegetable required
<i>Meat/Alternate Protein</i>	2 oz. equivalent minimum	
<i>Bread/Grain</i>	1 oz. equivalent minimum	

[Click here for school menus.](#)

A la carte items may be available for purchase. Payments may be made using the student's account [online through the K12 Payment Center](#) or by cash.

STUDENT SAFETY AND HEALTH

The safety, health and wellness of our students, staff and visitors is always our top priority. Our team does what we can to prevent emergencies, and GCS has an expert team of emergency management professionals creating plans, training and supporting school staff members, responding to issues, and coordinating with local, state and federal emergency management services to ensure your children are safe.

PROTECTING STUDENT SAFETY

SCHOOL SAFETY

Safe schools are important for a positive learning environment. Everyone in the school environment shares the responsibility for safety at school.

Supervision: Students will be reasonably supervised during school hours, field trips, on school buses, and during school activities. School administrators strictly enforce visitor and volunteer policies to keep students safe.

Safety of School Buildings and Grounds: The school should be free from hazards. Regular inspections are done to ensure this. Any potential hazards must be reported immediately.

Addressing Safety Concerns and Emergencies: Staff must always be alert to safety threats. Protocols are in place to prevent accidents and respond to emergencies. Staff and students receive safety training.

Planning for Emergencies: A school risk management plan is in place for each school. This includes conducting fire drills and other emergency drills.

Reporting Risks: Students should report any acts of violence, harassment, or bullying or any unusual behavior that may endanger safety. Staff must report any suspicious behavior or acts of violence, harassment, or bullying.

Potential Threats of Registered Sex Offenders: Each school principal registers with the North Carolina Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry to receive notifications when a registered sex offender moves within a one-mile radius of the school. When there are students who are registered sex offenders, special supervision plans must be put in place.

Student Behavior Standards: Students are expected to meet district behavior standards.

For more details, see [Board Policy 1510/4200/7270 School Safety](#).

[Click here for the School Safety and Emergency Management Department website.](#)

EMERGENCY PLANS

North Carolina law requires that each school have a specific, tailored school safety plan to respond to various types of threats, including those that require evacuation of the building and relocation to a safe reunification site.

It is important for student safety that these plans are NOT available to the public to ensure that information like school floor plans and evacuation routes are not easy to find. In the event of an emergency, you will be notified as soon as accurate information can be shared.

Ensuring that your child's school has accurate mobile phone numbers for you and your emergency contacts is the most important action you can take to keep your child safe.

[Click here for tips for emergency preparedness from GCS.](#)

DRUG & ALCOHOL-FREE SCHOOLS

The Guilford County Board of Education is committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol-free school environment.

- *Education/Prevention Programs:* The school will provide education and prevention programs about substance abuse and dependency in the K-12 curriculum.
- *Intervention Procedures:* The school will implement appropriate intervention procedures and programs.

- *Referral Procedure:* The school will develop a procedure to refer students to appropriate treatment programs within the school or the community.
- *Re-entry Procedure:* The school will develop a procedure for students returning to school from non-school based treatment programs.
- *Enforcement of Student Code of Conduct:* The school will enforce the Student Code of Conduct as it applies to the possession, sale, distribution, manufacture, dispensing, and/or use of illicit substances or any other unlawful or unauthorized chemical substance or drug paraphernalia. This does not include the lawful and proper use of drugs prescribed by a doctor or over the counter medications.

For more details, see [Board Policy 4325 Drug-free and Alcohol-free School Environment](#).

[Click here for GCS resources related to drug and alcohol-free schools.](#)

RULES FOR SECLUSION & RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

To ensure a safe school environment, Guilford County Schools has established rules for managing student behavior. School personnel, including employees and contracted individuals, can manage or remove students showing disruptive or dangerous behaviors. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited.

Reasonable Force: School personnel can use reasonable force in situations such as:

- *Correcting students*
- *Preventing disturbances or injuries*
- *Obtaining dangerous objects from students*
- *Self-defense*
- *Protecting people or property*
- *Maintaining order*

Seclusion and Restraint: These methods are not used on students with disabilities unless authorized by the student's [Individualized Education Plan \(IEP\)](#) or [Section 504 Plan](#).

- *Physical Restraint: This is the use of physical force to restrict a student's movement. It can be used in certain circumstances, like obtaining dangerous objects from a student, maintaining order, self-defense, ensuring safety, teaching a skill, calming a student, preventing self-injurious behavior, escorting a student safely, or preventing property destruction.*
- *Mechanical Restraint: This involves using a device to restrict a student's movement. It can be used in certain situations, like when used as an assistive technology device included in the student's IEP, Section 504 plan, or behavior intervention plan, securing a student during transportation, obtaining dangerous objects from a student, self-defense, or ensuring safety.*

- *Seclusion: This is the confinement of a student alone in an enclosed space. It can be used in certain circumstances, like responding to a person in control of a weapon or other dangerous object, maintaining order, self-defense, when a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent physical harm to self or others or imminent substantial destruction of school or another person's property, or when used as specified in the student's IEP, Section 504 plan, or behavior intervention plan.*
- *Isolation: This is a behavior management technique in which a student is placed alone in an enclosed space from which the student is not prevented from leaving.*
- *Time-Out: This is a behavior management technique in which a student is separated from other students for a limited period in a monitored setting.*

Aversive Procedures: These are physical or sensory interventions for modifying the behavior of a student with a disability that cause or may cause significant physical harm, serious and foreseeable long-term psychological impairment, or obvious repulsion on the part of observers. The use of aversive procedures is prohibited.

Notice, Reporting, and Documentation: School personnel must promptly notify the principal or designee of any use of aversive procedures, prohibited use of mechanical restraint, use of physical restraint resulting in observable physical injury to a student, prohibited use of seclusion, or any seclusion exceeding 10 minutes or the amount of time specified in a student's behavior intervention plan. Parents will be notified and provided with a written incident report.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 1510/4200/7270-R Seclusion and Restraint in Schools](#).

PROTECTING STUDENT HEALTH

STUDENT WELLNESS

The Guilford County Board of Education is committed to promoting student wellness, proper nutrition, and regular physical activity. The School Health Advisory Council helps to implement and monitor wellness in the district. The School Health Advisory Council is an advisory group with members who represent different aspects of school health (e.g., health education, physical education, nutrition services, mental and social health, employee wellness, family and community, school environment, and health services). The group acts collectively in providing advice to the school system on aspects of the school health programs. GCS provides nutrition education and promotes healthy eating. All foods available in schools should promote student health and meet nutrition standards. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in programs it funds. If you have a concern about discrimination in the GCS nutrition program, [click here for details on how to file a complaint](#).

Physical education is provided to promote lifelong physical activity. Students from kindergarten through eighth grade will receive 30 minutes of moderate to rigorous physical activity per day. Schools will provide a clean and safe meal environment, adequate time for students to eat meals, and drinking water throughout the school day. Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.

For more details, see [Board Policy 6140 Student Wellness](#).

SCHOOL NURSES

The School Health Nurse is a part of a team of nurses within the [Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services-Public Health Division](#) that provides students with primary and preventive nursing care. As the health services expert in your child's school, the School Health Nurse takes a lead role in detecting and addressing health problems, educating students and staff on health issues, and helping to manage the care of students with chronic illnesses and other special health care needs. The nurse supports student learning by working with the students, school staff, parents, healthcare providers and the community.

A nurse is assigned to each school. Parents can reach the nurse by calling their child's school or the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services- Public Health Division:

- Greensboro - 336-641-3896
- High Point - 336-641-7802
- GCS Health Services Director - 336-370-8325

TELEHEALTH SERVICES

GCS and Cone Health have started a program that lets doctors check on students at some Guilford County elementary schools without them having to leave school (with the consent of their parent/guardian). This is done using a system called telehealth. Pediatric doctors from Cone Health can see students at elementary schools through a video call. They use special Bluetooth tools to check the students' ears, throat, heart, and lungs. Medical assistants at the schools, who are trained by Cone Health, help with this. They work with the student, their parent(s), and the doctor who are all on the video call. This often means students can stay in school instead of making parents pick up the child early.

STUDENT ALLERGIES & HEALTH CONDITIONS

When students are diagnosed with chronic health conditions such as: allergic reactions to bee stings or specific foods, diabetes, epileptic seizures, asthma, or other documented medical conditions that require intervention at school, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the school administration is aware of the student's individual health care needs.

Parents of students who have diabetes should notify the school staff of their child's health status. A [Health Care Plan](#) will be completed for each student to ensure appropriate care. The school nurse will consult with the parent, medical professionals and school staff to develop that plan.

An [Emergency Care Plan](#) will be developed by the school nurse with opportunity for input from school administration, parent/guardian, and health care provider, as needed. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify school administration of any needed changes to the student's Emergency Care Plan. See "Administration of Medications" for more information.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

If necessary, there are procedures for students who need to take medication during school hours or after-school activities.

Administering Medication: School staff can give medication to students at school if a health care provider says it's necessary and a parent/guardian requests it in writing.

Self-Medication: The school is not responsible for students who self-medicate or for transporting medication to and from school.

Field Trip Medication Authorization: Two weeks prior to an in-county field trip and at least 30 days prior to an out-of-county field trip, in partnership with your school nurse, forms should be completed. In addition to the school health form on file, an [Authorization for Administration of Medication by School Personnel](#) form must be submitted by the parent for each medication that will be needed during the field trip and/or for doses of medications that are not ordinarily administered by school personnel. Forms must be completed in their entirety. All medication forms and consents must be returned to the school nurse no later than two (2) days prior to the field trip.

Liability: The school, its personnel, and the Board of Education are not liable for complications or side effects of medications when given according to the instructions provided by the parent/guardian and health care provider.

Asthma and Anaphylactic Reactions: Students with asthma or who are subject to anaphylactic reactions may carry and self-administer prescribed medication. They must show the school nurse they can use the medication and any necessary device. The student's parent or guardian must provide written authorization, including medical verification.

It's important to communicate with the school about your child's health needs.

For more details, see [Board Policy 6125 Administration of Medications to Students](#) and [Administrative Regulation 6125-R Administration of Medications to Students](#).

[Click here for the Medication Authorization Form.](#)

DENTAL AND VISION SCREENINGS

[Dental](#) and [vision](#) screenings are provided to students in cooperation with the Guilford County Public Health Department and other trained individuals. Students receive vision screenings from Guilford County Public Health School Nurses and trained volunteers. Dental screenings of students in kindergarten are conducted by a Dental Hygienist from the Guilford County Public Health Department.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL & MENTAL HEALTH

Guilford County Schools cares deeply about the success, safety, and well-being of its students. To help with this, GCS has a special program called School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) services. This program is part of a bigger plan called the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

The support given can be different for each student. It can be something that benefits all students, or it can be extra help for small groups or individual students who need it. A team of staff may recommend these services for your child through a process that screens all students in the district. Parents/caregivers can also ask for these services for their child.

Once a student is referred, a team at the school looks at what the student needs and suggests what services they should get. These services can include learning important life skills, understanding how to behave, and counseling. Parent/guardian consent is required for this type of health service. These services can be given by school counselors, social workers, and psychologists, or by mental health clinicians from GCS. They can also be provided by community-based providers that partner with GCS.

These services can be given in person or online, depending on what the student needs.

For additional information, parents/caregivers may contact the school counselor at their child's school or visit the Mental and Behavioral Health Services [website](#).

STUDENT/STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

The Guilford County Board of Education expects professional and ethical interactions between staff and students.

Professional Standards: Staff must maintain high standards in their interactions with students, providing a learning-friendly atmosphere and modeling expected behavior.

Prohibited Relationships: Staff are not allowed to have romantic relationships or sexual contact with any student. Violations can lead to disciplinary action, dismissal, and possible criminal charges.

Electronic Communications: Staff are not allowed to communicate with students through non-school-controlled platforms without parental permission. One-to-one electronic communications with students require written approval from the staff's supervisor and the student's parent, unless it's for an educational purpose or in an emergency.

Reporting Inappropriate Conduct: Staff must report any inappropriate conduct they witness or suspect to their supervisor or the student's principal. Students should report any misconduct they experience to a teacher, principal, or other school administrator.

Remember, it's important to communicate with the school about any concerns regarding staff-student interactions.

For more details, see [Board Policy 4040/7310 Staff-Student Relations](#).

[Click here to report a concern about student-staff relationships.](#)

FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

GCS Facilities teams are hard at work completing the [Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning \(HVAC\) projects and other upgrades funded by the voters of Guilford County through the bond](#). Unfortunately, years of putting off maintenance means that our systems sometimes fail. In the event a classroom environment is too hot (85 degrees or above) or too cold to hold instruction or there is another safety concern like an outage of water or electricity, multiple factors are considered, and principals first try to find an alternate location in the school to relocate the students. Generally, the Superintendent may consider shifting a school to remote instruction if more than half the classrooms are unsuitable for learning. [GCS will follow its normal notification procedures in the event of an emergency closure.](#)

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

Parents/caregivers have a right to request information about the district's asbestos management plan. Contact GCS Facilities Services at 336-370-2386.

PESTICIDE USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Parents/caregivers have a right to information about scheduled and unscheduled pesticide use on school property. For details, see [Board Policy 9205 Integrated Pest Management](#). Contact GCS Facilities Services at 336-370-2386.

PROTECTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EDUCATION

The Guilford County Board of Education's vision is: Transforming learning and life outcomes for all students. To support this vision, GCS believes that every student should have the same chance to get a good education. No student should be left out or treated unfairly because of their race, beliefs, where they're from, their sex, if they're married, if they're pregnant, if they have a disability, their religion, the language they speak, how much money their family has, their political beliefs, their age, how tall they are, how much they weigh, what they look like, who they're attracted to, or how they express their gender. This means all students will be treated fairly when it comes to classes, sports, counseling, after-school activities, and educational resources. See [Board Policy 4001 Equal Educational Opportunities](#).

PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT & BULLYING

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education is committed to maintaining a safe, positive, and caring environment for all students and employees, free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying. This includes any form of discrimination, harassment, and bullying based on an individual's real or perceived characteristics such as race, color, creed, political belief, ancestry, national origin, religion, linguistic and language differences, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, height, weight, physical characteristics, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, disability, or age. The policy also covers:

- *Discrimination:* Any act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based on their membership in a socially distinct group or category or on a personal characteristic.
- *Bullying or Harassing Behavior:* Any pattern of gestures or communications, or any physical act or threatening communication, that places a student or school employee in fear of harm or creates a hostile environment.
- *Sexual Harassment:* Unwanted or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- *Gender-based Harassment:* Acts of aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.
- *Retaliation:* Any reprisal, harassing conduct, or specific negative action against any person for reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy.

The policy applies to behavior that takes place in any school building or on any school premises, on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity, at any bus stop, during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity, at any time or place when the individual is subject to the authority of school personnel, and at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools. Violations of this policy are serious and will be promptly addressed by school officials. Any person who believes that they may have been bullied, harassed, or discriminated against in violation of this policy should report the matter to school officials. Anonymous reports may be made, although the school system may be limited in its ability to respond to anonymous reports. The Superintendent will maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and will report all verified cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying to the State Board of Education. The Superintendent will also evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent discrimination, harassment, and bullying and will share these evaluations periodically with the Board.

For more details, see [Board Policy 1710/4021/7230 Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying](#).

REPORTING & RESOLUTION PROCESS

GCS has a complaint process for individuals who believe their child may have been discriminated against, bullied, harassed, or retaliated against. This process also applies to individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has experienced such violations. Key points include:

- *Complaints:* These can be oral or written notifications of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or retaliation. They should be reported within 30 days of the incident.
- *Informal Resolution:* Some complaints may be resolved through mediation, conferences or other restorative approaches, if the people involved agree to it. Informal processes will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual violence, allegations of inappropriate sexual conduct by a staff member toward a student, or other serious situations.
- *Investigation:* An impartial investigator will conduct a thorough investigation of the complaint, which includes interviewing the person who may have been harmed (the “Complainant”) and the person who is accused of harming them (the “Respondent”), reviewing relevant information, and conducting other interviews as necessary.
- *Outcome:* The investigator will determine if the alleged conduct occurred and if it constitutes discrimination, harassment, bullying, or retaliation. If the complaint is confirmed, the investigator will specify corrective actions to end the behavior and prevent it from happening again, steps to address the effects on the complainant, and steps to protect the complainant from retaliation.
- *Appeal:* If the complainant or respondent is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, they may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or designee within five days of the final meeting with the investigator.
- *Confidentiality:* The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible, and all meetings and hearings conducted will be private.

This process is designed to ensure that all students and employees are treated equitably and with fairness. There are additional procedures to address procedural safeguards for students with disabilities as well as procedures to address sex-based discrimination that falls under Title IX. For more information about those, see below.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 1710/4021//7230-R Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process](#).

REPORT AN ISSUE OR CONCERN

Report concerns to the principal or another safe adult in the school. If you wish to report in writing to someone outside of your school or anonymously, [click here to file a report of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and/or bullying](#).

NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITIES

POLICY SUMMARY

Our school board is committed to providing a fair and supportive environment for all students and staff, including those with disabilities. We follow the guidelines of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which means:

- We don't unlawfully discriminate against people with disabilities.
- We provide supports and services to students with disabilities in the most suitable setting for their needs.
- We have a designated official to ensure we're following these laws.
- We have procedures for handling complaints about actions that violate these laws, and we aim to resolve these complaints promptly and fairly.
- We provide notice that we don't discriminate on the basis of disability.
- We provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified student with disabilities.
- We have safeguards in place for identifying, evaluating, or placing a student with disabilities, including allowing parents or guardians to examine relevant records, participate in an impartial hearing, and have representation by counsel.

We strive to ensure that students with disabilities have the same opportunities as students without disabilities to achieve the same results, gain the same benefits, and reach the same levels of achievement.

For more details, see [Board Policy 1730/4022/7231 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities](#).

[Click here for more information from the state of North Carolina about your rights and responsibilities in the special education process.](#)

REPORTING & RESOLUTION PROCESS

Section 504 Impartial Hearing Procedures

The process for parents or guardians to challenge decisions about the identification, evaluation, or placement of a child under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act includes:

- Each school has a Section 504 Coordinator, and there's also a district-wide coordinator:

Melissa Carino, GCS 504 Coordinator

336-375-2394

carinom@gcsnc.com

- Parents or guardians can review records related to their child's identification, evaluation, or placement by requesting them through the school's Section 504 Coordinator.
- If disagreements arise about a child's identification, evaluation, or placement, parents or guardians are encouraged to resolve them informally with the principal and the school's 504 coordinator.
- If the parent or guardian continues to be dissatisfied, the parent or guardian is encouraged to notify the GCS 504 Coordinator. The GCS 504 Coordinator will meet with the parent or guardian and school staff, gather relevant information, and determine the appropriate response.
- If disagreements can't be resolved at the school level, parents or guardians can request a due process hearing before an impartial hearing officer within one year of the decision in question.
- The hearing will be audio recorded and each party will have up to two and a half hours to present their case.
- The hearing officer will issue a written decision within 30 days of the hearing.
- If unsatisfied with the decision, parents or guardians can seek a review from a second independent hearing officer within 30 days of the initial decision.

Please note, these hearing procedures are not available if the remedy requested is available through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. [See Services for Exceptional Children](#). To address complaints of discrimination, harassment, bullying or retaliation based on a child's disability, use the process described [in the above section on Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying](#).

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 1730/4022/7231-R Section 504 Impartial Hearing Procedure](#).

[Click here for resources and information from the GCS 504 Coordinator](#).

REPORT AN ISSUE OR CONCERN

Report concerns to your school's 504 coordinator or the GCS 504 coordinator, Melissa Carino at 336-375-2394 or carinom@gcsnc.com.

NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

POLICY SUMMARY

Our school board is committed to creating a safe, respectful environment for all students and staff, free from sex-based discrimination. This includes discrimination, harassment, bullying, or retaliation based on sex, gender, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. We have a designated Title IX Coordinator who oversees the implementation of this policy. If there's a complaint about sex-based discrimination:

- It will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by an impartial investigator.
- The complainant and respondent will be treated equitably and given opportunities to present their perspectives.
- If the complaint is confirmed, the investigator will specify corrective actions to end the behavior and prevent it from recurring, steps to address the effects on the complainant, and steps to protect the complainant from retaliation.
- If the complainant or respondent is dissatisfied with the investigation results, they can appeal the decision to the Superintendent or designee within five (5) days after meeting with the investigator.

All employees undergo annual training on their obligations to report, address, and prevent sex-based discrimination under Title IX. All required notices of our prohibition on sex-based discrimination will be posted, and all records of reports and complaints will be maintained for at least seven years. We strive to keep the complaint and investigation confidential to the extent possible. Please note that this policy is separate from the procedures for complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying under Policy 1710/4021/7230. See [Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying](#).

For more details, [see Policy 1725/4035/7236 Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex](#).

REPORTING & RESOLUTION PROCESS

GCS has an investigation process for incidents when a student may have experienced sex-based harassment or discrimination. Key points include:

- *Complaints:* These can be oral or written notifications of sex-based discrimination, harassment, bullying, or retaliation. They should be reported within 30 days of the incident.
- *District Title IX Coordinator:* GCS has a Title IX Office that supports and monitors investigations of sex-based harassment and discrimination. When there is an allegation that may be sex-based harassment or discrimination, the GCS Title IX coordinator will contact the family to invite them to file a Title IX complaint if the family has not already done so.

- *Informal Resolution:* Some complaints may be resolved through mediation, conferences or other restorative approaches, if the people involved agree to it. Informal processes will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual violence, allegations of inappropriate sexual conduct by a staff member towards a student, or other serious situations.
- *Investigation:* An impartial investigator will conduct a thorough investigation of the complaint, which includes interviewing the person who may have been harmed (the “Complainant”) and the person who is accused of harming them (the “Respondent”), reviewing relevant information, and conducting other interviews as necessary.
- *Outcome:* The investigator will determine if the alleged conduct occurred and if it constitutes sex-based discrimination or harassment. If the complaint is confirmed, the investigator will specify corrective actions to end the behavior and prevent it from happening again, steps to address the effects on the complainant, and steps to protect the complainant from retaliation.
- *Appeal:* If the complainant or respondent is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, they may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or designee within five days of the final meeting with the investigator.
- *Confidentiality:* The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible, and all meetings and hearings conducted will be private.

This process is designed to ensure that all students and employees are treated equitably and with fairness. There are additional procedures to address procedural safeguards for students with disabilities as well as procedures to address discrimination, harassment, bullying and retaliation that does not fall under Title IX. For more information about those, see below.

For more details, [see Administrative Regulation 1725/4035/7236-R Title IX Complaint Process.](#)

REPORT AN ISSUE OR CONCERN

Report concerns to the principal or another safe adult in the school. If you wish to report in writing to someone outside of your school or anonymously, [click here to file a report of Title IX sex-based discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and/or bullying.](#)

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education is committed to providing a free public-school education to all children, including those who are homeless.

- *Homeless students are defined as children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence because of a loss of housing, financial hardship or similar reason. This includes a wide range of living situations such as living in motels, emergency shelters, cars, parks, or similar settings.*
- *Homeless students can be enrolled immediately, even without proof of residency or other documents. The Homeless Liaison will assist in securing necessary records.*

- *Homeless students can choose to attend their school of origin or any public school that students living in the same attendance area can attend. Transportation will be provided to/from the school of origin at the parent or guardian's request.*
- *If disagreements arise about a child's school assignment, parents or guardians can appeal the decision through an enrollment dispute resolution process.*
- *Homeless students are automatically eligible for Title I services, which include a variety of educational programs and resources.*
- *Each school has a Homeless Liaison to assist with these processes.*

This policy is designed to eliminate barriers to education for homeless students and ensure they receive the same services and opportunities as all other students.

For more details, see [Board Policy 4125 Homeless Students](#).

[Click here for additional resources from the GCS Homeless Services Department.](#)

REPORTING & RESOLUTION PROCESS

GCS has a dispute resolution process for parents, caregivers, or unaccompanied youth who disagree with school decisions about eligibility, school selection, or enrollment of a student experiencing homelessness.

- *A disagreement can be referred to the Homeless Liaison, who will attempt to resolve the matter informally.*
- *If informal resolution is unsuccessful, the Complainant can initiate a formal dispute resolution process.*
- *The student can continue attending their chosen school and participate fully in school activities during the dispute.*
- *The Homeless Liaison provides the Complainant with a written statement of rights and procedures, including contact information, appeal procedures, and the right to enroll and participate in all school activities.*
- *The dispute resolution process includes a review by the District Homeless Liaison, an appeal to the Superintendent's Designee, and a final appeal to the State Coordinator for homeless education.*
- *The process is designed to be expedited, with a final District decision reached within 15 school days or 30 calendar days, whichever is fewer.*

[Click here for more information about the rights of families experiencing homelessness.](#) See [Administrative Regulation 4125-R](#) for details about resolving disputes.

REPORT AN ISSUE OR CONCERN

Report a concern to your principal or to the GCS Homeless Services Coordinator.

Drennan Paylor, GCS Homeless Services Coordinator

336-574-2637

paylord2@gcsnc.com

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

These key topics are the most frequent questions and challenges families experience during the year. Get informed. Start the school year strong to end the school year strong!

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

POLICY SUMMARY

Attendance is one of the most important factors in student learning. *Students who attend regularly are more likely to learn on grade level, graduate on time, and be ready for college and careers. Students who regularly miss two (2) days a month are 7.4 times more likely to drop out of high school!* School attendance is mandatory according to North Carolina state law for children between the ages of seven (7) (or younger if enrolled) and 16, and parents are accountable for their attendance.

- *Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring daily school attendance.*
- *Accurate attendance records are kept by school officials, and these records are used to enforce North Carolina's Compulsory Attendance Law.*
- *Students are expected to be on time and remain at school until dismissed. Late arrivals and early departures should be excused in writing by a parent or guardian.*
- *Absences can be excused for reasons such as personal illness, death in the immediate family, medical appointments, religious observances, and participation in valid educational opportunities.*
- *Unexcused absences are deemed unlawful, but out-of-school suspension or expulsion is not considered an unlawful absence.*
- *School-related activities, such as field trips and athletic contests, are not counted as absences.*
- *In the case of excused absences and short-term out-of-school suspensions, students are permitted to make up missed work.*

- *Chronic absenteeism, defined as missing ten percent or more of school days, is monitored and addressed with strategies to improve attendance.*
- *Special circumstances, such as chronic health problems and homelessness, are considered when addressing attendance issues.*
- *Attendance may impact eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.*

For more details, see [Board Policy 4400 Student Attendance](#).

[Click here for attendance resources from the GCS Social Work/Dropout Prevention team.](#)

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM GCS ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

It takes a strong partnership between you and your child's school to make sure your child stays on track with attendance.

- Each school has a designated staff person responsible for improving attendance and an annually updated written attendance plan.
- Attendance is recorded daily in elementary and middle school, and for each class period in high school.
- Students must be in attendance for at least one-half of the instructional day or class period to be counted present.
- Excused absences require a written explanation from a parent, guardian, or custodian. Absences for educational reasons must be pre-approved.
- Late arrivals and early dismissals require an explanation from parents according to the school attendance plan.
- Students who miss instruction due to absences are offered a meaningful opportunity to make up the learning and demonstrate proficiency in the missed content within a reasonable time.
- Procedures are in place for teacher contacts and attendance interventions when a student has accumulated three, six, and ten unexcused absences in a school year.
- For students enrolled in virtual school programs, ten unexcused absences may result in a recommendation for the student to return to their zoned in-person school at the conclusion of the quarter.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 4400-R Student Attendance](#).

ATTENDANCE RESOURCES

Sometimes it is hard to know when a child is too sick for school. Guidelines for when to stay home:

- *A fever of 100.4 degrees or higher that is not responsive to medicine*

- *Sore throat when accompanied by fever, chills, or a stomachache; especially if there are red or white spots in the throat*
- *Diarrhea or vomiting*
- *A contagious infection such as pinkeye (conjunctivitis) or lice*

[Click here for more information about when to stay home.](#)

[Click here for updated guidance about COVID-19.](#)

When you know your child will not be at school:

- *Contact your child's school if your student is sick. Send an email or leave a voicemail message with the date and reason for the student's absence.*
- *If you know your child will be absent due to a trip, a religious holiday, or other planned reason, contact your child's school as far in advance as possible.*

[Sign up for the PowerSchool Parent Portal](#) to get up-to-date information about your child's attendance. In Parent Portal, you can opt in to receive weekly reports of grades and attendance. You will receive an automated message when your child has an unexcused absence if your contact information is correct.

STUDENT DRESS CODES

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education values students' self-expression through appearance, while also emphasizing the need for an orderly and respectful learning environment.

- *Each school will publish its dress code at the start of the school year.*
- *Students are required to maintain an appearance that is appropriate for school. If a student's attire disrupts the educational environment or violates the dress code, they will be asked to change.*
- *Principals will provide written guidelines to help students determine appropriate dress for school. These guidelines are subject to the Superintendent's review.*
- *Schools may initiate plans for a Standard Mode of Dress (SMOD) or school uniform with the Superintendent's approval. These plans must be supported by educational reasons, such as achieving school objectives, promoting a positive school climate, and increasing school safety.*
- *For theme, choice, or magnet schools, the School Leadership Team can adopt a uniform or SMOD plan without community input, but input is welcomed.*
- *For traditional attendance zone schools, the School Leadership Team will solicit parent input before adopting a uniform or SMOD plan.*

- *Once a uniform or SMOD plan is approved, the school will provide notice for purchasing attire, a procedure for registering objections, clear enforcement guidelines, and a process to reconsider the plan every two years (for traditional attendance zone schools only).*

For more details, see [Board Policy 4316 Student Dress Code](#).

SCHOOL DRESS CODES

Individual schools publish their student dress codes at the beginning of the school year. Contact your child's school for more information.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education welcomes parents and community members to participate in school activities and events. However, to ensure a safe and focused learning environment, the following rules apply:

- *All visitors must first check in at the school's administrative office for permission to be on campus.*
- *School staff will direct any visitor without permission to the office or notify the principal.*
- *Students should report any unusual or suspicious behavior to a staff member immediately.*
- *Visitors should not distract teachers or interrupt classes.*
- *At public events, spectators, including students and adults, should demonstrate good sportsmanship and citizenship. This means they should not harass or heckle players, participants, or referees; throw anything onto the playing surface; or approach a team's coach unless invited.*
- *Students who violate these rules may face disciplinary action according to the Code of Conduct.*
- *Visitors who violate these rules may be asked to leave and could lose the privilege of visiting the campus or attending future school events.*

These rules help ensure that our schools remain safe, respectful, and conducive to learning for everyone.

For more details, see [Board Policy 5020 Visitors and School-Sponsored Activities](#).

VISITING YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

Contact your child's teacher or the school principal to arrange for a visit to school. Schools may have reasonable restrictions on times and days available for visits. Conferences with teachers and classroom visits must be scheduled in advance with the teacher.

If you would like to spend a lot of time in your child's school or classroom, join Team GCS as a volunteer! Volunteers must pass a background check to ensure our students are safe. [Click here for more information about how to register as a volunteer.](#)

STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education's Student Discipline policy emphasizes the importance of self-discipline in students' learning.

- *All school personnel are expected to treat students fairly and respectfully, and parents/caregivers are encouraged to maintain regular communication with school personnel.*
- *The Code of Conduct for student behavior applies to all student activities on and off school property, including online conduct.*
- *Certain disciplinary methods are prohibited, including suspension for attendance violations, corporal punishment, and [the use of seclusion or restraint except as provided by law.](#)*
- *The Superintendent or designee will develop intervention services and strategies for students who violate the Code of Conduct. These may include school-level programming and placement in alternative learning programs.*
- *Principals have the authority to impose short-term suspensions (10 days or fewer), while long-term suspensions (11 days or more) can only be imposed by the Superintendent or designee upon recommendation of the principal.*
- *Only the Board has the authority to expel a student from school if the student's continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.*

These rules are designed to create a safe, orderly, and positive learning environment for all students. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to familiarize themselves and their children with these rules. You and your child will be asked to sign a verification that you have received and understand the Code of Student Conduct.

For more details, see [Board Policy 4300 Student Discipline.](#)

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT SUMMARY

The GCS Student Code of Conduct is designed to foster a safe and positive learning environment. Here are the key points:

- *The Code applies to all student activities on and off school property, including online conduct.*
- *Certain acts that occur on school property must be reported to law enforcement, such as assault resulting in serious personal injury, sexual assault, and possession of a firearm in violation of the law.*

- Each type of unacceptable behavior in the school environment is grouped into a “level” that is based on the severity and level of harm to others and to the learning environment.
- Disciplinary intervention depends on various factors, including the circumstances of the violation, the age and maturity of the student, and the potential for disruption or safety concerns at the school.
- Mitigating factors, such as the student being in elementary school or having no prior record of violating the Code of Student Conduct, may lead to a reduction in the level of the violation.
- Aggravating factors, such as the student being in high school or having violated the Code of Student Conduct before, may lead to an increase in the level of the violation.
- The principal or designee at the school is responsible for determining the appropriate response to behavior incidents.

LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III	LEVEL IV	LEVEL V
Minimal disruption to school, consequences typically handled at the school level.	Mild disruption to school typically without injury to other students or staff.	Serious rule violations typically with serious impact on learning, well-being, and/or safety of students or staff.	Serious offenses that threaten the safety of others, or substantially disrupt the education environment.	Offenses that result in the indefinite removal of a student from school and all school properties by the GCS Board of Education.

LEVEL I BEHAVIORS

Rule	Description
I-1 Noncompliance	Students must comply with all directions of school personnel or volunteers.
I-2 School/Class Attendance	Being tardy to class, skipping class/school, or leaving campus without permission is prohibited.
I-3 Out of Area	Being in any area of the school campus or property without permission is prohibited.
I-4 Profane, Vulgar, or Obscene Language or Materials	Cursing or use of vulgar, profane, or obscene language is prohibited.

I-5 Inappropriate Dress	Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with an effective learning environment.
I-6 Use of Unauthorized Electronic Devices or Applications During Instructional Time	Students may not use any electronic device or personal entertainment device during instructional time unless authorized.
I-7 Trespassing	No student shall be on the campus of any school except the one to which the student is assigned without the knowledge and consent of the officials of that school.
I-8 Gambling	Students shall not engage in any form of games of chance or gambling for money and/or things of value.
I-9 Invasion of Privacy	Students are prohibited from taking photographs, videos, or other media of any other student or school personnel without permission.
I-10 Tobacco and Cannabidiol (CBD)	No student shall possess, display, or use any tobacco product or CBD product.
I-11 Vaping	Vapes and e-cigarettes are banned from school campuses and school events.

Responses that may be appropriate for a Level I behavior include, but are not limited to:

- *Verbal warning*
- *Parent/caregiver scontact*
- *Conference with student and/or parent/caregiver*
- *Confiscation of unauthorized items*
- *Restricted use of electronic devices*
- *Required work-based contributions to the school*
- *Required participation in Counseling services*
- *Referral to student services team*
- *Required participation in Restorative practices program*
- *Bullying prevention training*

- *Required attendance at tobacco, CBD, or vaping addiction programs*
- *Temporary social restriction from peers*
- *Service Learning*
- *Return of property*
- *Restitution for damage*
- *Revocation of school-related privileges*
- *Behavior contract*
- *Up to a 3-day Suspension from receiving GCS-provided transportation*
- *Warning of referral to Level II (repeated offenses)*
- *Supports determined through the Multi-Tiered System of Support (“MTSS”) framework*

LEVEL II BEHAVIORS

Rule	Description
II-1 Integrity	Students must not engage in cheating, plagiarism, falsification, violation of copyright laws, or violation of computer access.
II-2 School/Class/Activity Disturbance	Any physical or verbal disturbance which interrupts or interferes with teaching or orderly conduct of class/school activities is prohibited.
II-3 School Transportation Disturbance or Misbehavior	Any physical or verbal disturbance which interrupts or interferes with the safe and orderly operation of the vehicle is prohibited.
II-4 Non-Compliance with Search or Safety Precaution	Students must comply with the directives of school officials to protect the safety of the school environment.
II-5 Unjustified Activation of a Fire or Other Alarm System	Students must not activate any fire or other alarm system unless authorized to do so by school employees or unless there are reasonable grounds to believe that an actual emergency situation exists.
II-6 Possession of Incendiary Material	The possession of any incendiary material (including but not limited to matches, lighters, or lighter fluid) or the use of any material reasonably likely to result in a fire on school property is prohibited.
II-7 Property Damage	No student shall intentionally damage or attempt to damage or deface school property or personal property.
II-8 Theft	No student shall steal, attempt to steal, or knowingly be in possession of stolen property.

II-9 Extortion	Students shall not extort through verbal, written or physical threats, including coercion or intimidation anything of value (personal property, money, or information) from another student or school employee.
II-10 Consensual Lewd or Sexual Behavior	Students shall conduct their personal and social relationships according to acceptable community standards. Inappropriate public displays of affection will not be allowed.
II-11 Threat/False Threat	No student shall make any threat through written or verbal language, sign, or act which conveys a serious expression of intent to cause harm or violence.
II-12 Failure to Report a Firearm or Firearms	Any student who has knowledge that another student possesses or intends to bring a firearm on any school campus or to any school activity must immediately report this information to school or law enforcement authorities.
II-13 Bullying, Harassment, or Discrimination	Students are prohibited from engaging in discrimination, harassment, or bullying of other students.
II-14 Aiding and Abetting	No student shall aid or abet another student in violating any rule in the Code of Student Conduct.

Responses that may be appropriate for a Level II behavior include but are not limited to:

- *Any responses available for Level I infractions*
- *In-school suspension*
- *Alternative classroom assignment*
- *After-school detention or Saturday school*
- *Permanent removal from participation in extracurricular/co-curricular programs or activities*
- *Suspension from receiving GCS-provided transportation*
- *Out-of-school suspension for one to 5 days*
- *Warning of referral to Level III (repeated offenses)*
- *Supports determined through the Multi-Tiered System of Support (“MTSS”) framework*

LEVEL III BEHAVIORS

Rule	Description
III-1 Physical Aggression/Fighting	Fighting or physical aggression toward students, staff, or any other person is prohibited. A student who is attacked may use reasonable force in self-defense.

III-2 Possession of a Dangerous Weapon or Other Instrument	Students shall not possess or conceal or transport any weapon, chemical agent or other instrument that could cause or that is intended to cause bodily injury or other harm to another.
III-3 Possession of a Counterfeit Dangerous Weapon or Other Instrument	Students shall not possess, conceal, transport, or wield any counterfeit weapon, chemical agent or other instrument that has the appearance of being able to cause bodily injury or other physical harm.
III-4 Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, Controlled Substances, Chemicals, and Drug Paraphernalia	No student shall possess, use, distribute, sell, possess with intent to distribute or sell, or conspire or attempt to distribute or sell, purchase, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, other controlled substance, any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified wine, other intoxicating liquor, drug paraphernalia, counterfeit substance, any unauthorized prescription drug, or any other chemicals or products with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration, euphoria, or of otherwise altering the student's mood or behavior.
III-5 Sex-based harassment, Sexual Assault, or Violent Sexual Offenses	Students are prohibited from engaging in unwelcome conduct towards another student on the basis of sex that could create a hostile environment for another student.
III-6 Hazing	Hazing is prohibited. No group or individual shall require a student to wear abnormal dress, play abusive or ridiculous tricks on him/her, frighten, scold, beat, harass, or subject him/her to personal indignity.
III-7 Bomb Threat	No student shall make a bomb threat or hoax by making a false report that a device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting, or burning is located on the school premises or at the site of school activities.
III-8 Acts of Terror	No student shall threaten to commit an act of terror on school property or at the site of a school activity that is designed to cause, or is likely to cause, serious injury or death to another person.

Responses that may be appropriate for Level III behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- *Any consequences under Level I or II*
- *Out-of-school suspension for one to 10 days*
- *Reassignment to an alternative learning program or school*
- *Warning of referral to Level IV (for repeated offenses)*

LEVEL IV BEHAVIORS

Rule	Description
IV-1 Arson	Students shall not cause any fire whether or not there is an intent to commit arson or other crimes involving fire or explosion. Any violation of this rule must be reported to the fire marshal.

IV-2 Firearm/Destructive Device

Any student shall be recommended for suspension of 365 calendar days for bringing a firearm or destructive device onto school property or to a school-sponsored event off school property, or for possessing a firearm or destructive device on school property or at a school-sponsored event off school property. Violation of this rule must be reported to law enforcement.

Responses that may be appropriate for a Level IV behavior include long-term suspension and/or assignment to an alternative school or program. In certain situations, the reassignment may be permanent. Additionally, by law, with limited exceptions, students must be recommended for suspension for 365 days for bringing a firearm or destructive device onto school property.

LEVEL V BEHAVIORS

Level V refers to cases that justify expulsion: The indefinite removal of a student (age 14 or older) from school and all school properties by the GCS Board of Education. Level V behaviors are those in which the student's continued presence constitutes a clear threat to other persons or who is a registered sex offender subject to the Jessica Lunsford Act. Any violation of a rule listed under Level III or Level IV may result in Level V intervention if the circumstances and aggravating factors warrant such a response.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 4300-R Student Discipline – Code of Conduct](#).

GCS ACADEMICS & EXTRACURRICULARS

GCS offers a superior education to children in Guilford County, with 121 schools and a wealth of programs for all types of learners. We prepare students for college, career and life. You may choose to attend your neighborhood school where your child will receive a well-rounded education in a welcoming and supportive environment that challenges them and feels like home. Some students have different learning interests, goals, or needs that make one of the many choice options in GCS the best fit. Whether your child needs gifted education, loves the arts, gets excited about science, wants to fly, or experience languages, you'll find great learning environments in GCS.

NORTH CAROLINA STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY

The **North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS)** defines the appropriate content standards for each grade and each high school course to provide a uniform set of learning standards for every public school in North Carolina. These standards define what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of each school year or course so that they are prepared for postsecondary opportunities, be it college, career, or military. [Click here for more information.](#)

ACADEMICS IN GCS

Guilford County Schools provides a world-class education to all students, meeting each child where they are and developing them into well-rounded individuals ready for college, career and life. Our students succeed through innovative programs, highly qualified and caring educators and a range of school choice

options to fit every child's needs. Our district boasts some of the highest ranked high schools in the state and the nation.

[Click here for more information about teaching and learning in GCS.](#)

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

GCS believes that strong, evidence-based instructional materials for classrooms and media centers are a critical part of our academic program.

- *Selection Criteria:* Educational resources should align with the NC Standard Course of Study and general educational goals of the school district, be appropriate for the students' age, interests, abilities, learning styles, social development, and maturity levels, and represent the diversity of values in society. They should also provide various points of view, including those considered controversial.
- *Selection Process:* The selection of instructional materials involves input from faculty, staff, students, parents, and the community. In addition, each school establishes a Media and Technology Advisory Committee (MTAC) to meet at least three times a year.
- *Types of Resources:* Resources can include textbooks, student materials, supplementary reading and informational materials, learning software, periodicals, newspapers, charts, community resource people, agencies, programs, machine-readable data files, kits, maps, microforms, motion pictures, realia, slides, sound and video recordings, plays, concerts, athletic events, and written and performed music.
- *Meeting Student Needs:* The materials should provide supports and scaffolds to help all students access the North Carolina standards and should provide supports for effective and sustainable implementation.
- *Parent Rights:* Parents have the right to view educational materials used in the classroom and to challenge materials selected by the staff for use in the classrooms.
- *Challenging Resources:* Parents or guardians can request an alternate assignment for their child if they find a selected resource personally offensive or too mature for the student. They can also challenge educational resources, and the resources will remain in use during the challenge.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3200 Selection of Instructional Materials](#) and [Administrative Regulation 3200-R Selection of Instructional Materials/Educational Resources](#).

HEALTH EDUCATION

GCS offers a comprehensive health education program that aims to provide students with accurate information and encourages them to be responsible for their own health. Our program complies with all requirements of North Carolina state law.

Program Scope: The program covers all major aspects of healthful living for students from kindergarten through high school. Instruction on gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality is not included in the curriculum for kindergarten through fourth grade.

Instruction Focus: The program includes instruction on the benefits of sexual abstinence until marriage, risks of premarital sexual activity, prevention of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, awareness of sexual assault, sexual abuse, sex trafficking, and risk reduction.

Parental Involvement: Parents can review all program objectives and instructional materials before they are used with students. Parents also have the right to withdraw their student from participating in the program by writing to the principal.

Standards for Instruction: Instructors are expected to follow the program objectives and only use the instructional materials that have been made available to parents for review. Information conveyed during instruction will be objective and based upon scientific research that is peer-reviewed and accepted by professionals and credentialed experts in the field of sexual health education.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3540 Comprehensive Health Education Program](#).

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. The [Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) has developed a framework to apply SEL strategies. All competencies are embedded in our classrooms and schools' practices and policies, and through partnerships with families and communities.

- *SEL Competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.*
- *How we approach: GCS supports Harmony SEL for the elementary school level, Second Step for the middle school level, and School Connect for the high school level.*
- *Parents as Emotional Coaches: YOU are your child's most impactful teacher for developing the skills to understand themselves and others. [Click here for resources that support parents with social emotional learning at home.](#)*

[Click here for more information and resources about SEL in GCS.](#)

GRADES & REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Schools has a comprehensive grading system to keep parents/guardians informed about their children's academic progress.

- *Report Cards:* Sent at the end of each grading period, with interim progress reports issued at the midpoint. Additional reports are made if a student is making unsatisfactory progress or has excessive absences.

Grading Scale for K-2	
4	Consistently exceeds grade level expectations
3	Consistently meets grade level expectations independently
2	Needs support to meet grade level expectations
1	Below grade level expectations with support

Grading Scale for 3-12	
A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	59 and BELOW
I	INCOMPLETE
Pass/Fail	Only for students taking the Lab portion of an AP Course as non-graded, which will not affect the student's GPA.

- *Weighted Grades:* Only for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, college courses, and designated honor courses.
- *Final Exams:* For high school-level courses, exams make up a significant part of a student's grade. See [Administrative Regulation 3400-R Grading and Reporting Student Progress](#) for more details.

Teachers are responsible for keeping accurate records and completing the progress report. The Superintendent ensures that the grading system is uniform at all grade levels throughout the school system.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3400 Grading and Reporting Student Progress](#).

PROGRESS REPORTS & REPORT CARDS

Progress reports and report cards are sent electronically, and student grades are available [in the PowerSchool Parent Portal](#) at all times. You may opt to receive a weekly email with an update on your child's grades and attendance through the Parent Portal. You will need your child's GCS student ID number to claim your Parent Portal account.

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL TOOLS

WHAT TO EXPECT

We are excited about being a one-to-one technology district where every student has their own dedicated device. These devices are used by students to receive information from their teachers, connect to learning applications inside the classroom and at home, and to design and submit work for their classes. [Click here for links and log in information.](#)

For more information about the devices used by students, click on the pages dedicated to the device below.

- [Grades Pre-K to 3: iPads](#)
- [Grades 4 to 12: Chromebooks](#)

RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education's Technology Responsible Use policy provides students and staff with access to various technological resources to enhance learning and communication. Students are expected to use district devices and technology in ways that benefit their education.

- *These resources should be used responsibly, ethically, and respectfully.*
- *The use of these resources is monitored, and misuse can result in disciplinary action.*
- *District technological resources are for school-related purposes only. Personal use for entertainment or commercial gain is prohibited.*
- *Users must respect copyright laws and not make unauthorized copies of software.*
- *Users must respect the privacy of others and not share personal information without consent.*
- *Users may not damage or disrupt the system's performance, including transmitting viruses or disabling antivirus programs.*
- *Unauthorized activities, such as hacking, are prohibited.*
- *Users may not use private WiFi hotspots or other personal technology on campus to access the Internet outside the District's wireless network.*
- *Personal websites that disrupt the school environment or misuse District names, logos, or trademarks may be removed.*
- *All users must agree to comply with this policy and consent to the District's use of monitoring systems to detect inappropriate use of technological resources.*

Remember, the use of these resources is a privilege, not a right, and it comes with responsibilities. Let's all work together to use technology in a way that enhances learning and respects others.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use](#), [Board Policy 3226/4205 Internet Safety](#) and [Administrative Regulation 3225/4312/7320-R Responsible Use of Electronic Transmission Capabilities](#).

LOST OR BROKEN SCHOOL DEVICES

[Click here for basic troubleshooting resources.](#)

For issues, concerns, and assistance with broken, lost or stolen devices, contact your child's school.

TUTORING

GCS provides tutoring options during and outside the school day to help your child succeed. Some options are available by invitation based on student needs; while homework help and other options are available to all students. [Click here for more information about tutoring offerings for 2024-25.](#)

STUDENT PROMOTION & ACCOUNTABILITY

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education has responsibility to ensure all students receive a sound basic education. This means that students learn the skills needed for higher education and the workforce.

Promotion Standards: The superintendent develops standards for promoting students to the next grade level. These standards are used by teachers and administrators to assess each student's readiness to move up.

Kindergarten through Grade 8: Promotion is based partly on reading proficiency. Multiple criteria are used to assess readiness, including test scores, grades, and a portfolio of the student's work.

Grades 9 through 12: Promotion is based on the number of units earned towards graduation.

Students with Disabilities: These students are held to the same promotion standards as others unless the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team has determined that a modified curriculum resulting in an alternative assessment and graduation pathway is most appropriate for the student.

Children of Military Families: The superintendent can waive course prerequisites for these students.

Appeals: Appeals of promotion decisions can be made if there's an alleged violation of a specific law or policy. Otherwise, final decisions about promotion are the responsibility of the principal.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery: Students in grades 9 through 12 can earn course credit by showing they've mastered the material without taking the course. Students in grades 6 to 8 can earn credit for high school courses offered in middle school this way.

Credit Recovery: High school students who haven't earned required course credit for graduation can recover lost credits. Credit recovery courses are pass/fail and don't replace the original failed course on the transcript.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3420 Student Promotion and Accountability](#).

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROMOTION STANDARDS

For **Kindergarten to 2nd grade**, students' reading progress is checked using the [DIBELS assessment](#). This helps see if students are on track and if they need extra help.

In **3rd grade**, students need to score at or above Level 3 on the NC End-of-Grade Test of Reading or the Read to Achieve Alternate Assessment. Some students might be able to move to 4th grade for a good reason, even if they don't meet these standards. This is called a Good Cause Exemption. It can apply to:

- English Learner students with less than two years in an English as a Second Language program.
- Students with disabilities.
- Students who show they can read at the 3rd grade level on a different approved test.
- Students who have gotten extra help with reading and have repeated a grade before.

For **4th and 5th grade**, the principal decides if a student moves up based on their grades, how they do on tests, and other ways they show they're ready for the next grade.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 3420-R Student Promotion and Accountability](#).

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION STANDARDS

To move up in grades 6 to 8, the school looks at several things:

- If students meet the local promotion standards for Guilford County Schools.
- If they pass at least five subjects, including three of the four core subjects (language arts, math, science, social studies).
- Their scores on interim assessments.
- Their portfolio of work.
- Their growth from one year to the next.

If a student fails the same core subject more than once during middle school, they need extra help to move up to high school. Parents get a progress report at the end of each grading period, and teachers meet with parents if a student is having trouble learning.

If a student might need to repeat a grade, parents are told by the end of the third quarter. The school forms a committee to review the student's performance and the help they've been given. This committee includes three teachers, a school administrator, and the student's parent or caregiver.

The principal makes the final decision about whether a student moves up or repeats a grade. If a parent or teacher disagrees, they can ask for an appeal. But the final decision is up to the principal, according to state law.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 3420-R Student Promotion and Accountability](#).

HIGH SCHOOL PROMOTION STANDARDS

In high school, grade-level promotion represents that the student is on-track for high school graduation in four years. Each academic year, students in grades 9 to 12 must earn a minimum number of credits to be promoted to the next grade level.

Grade	Promotion requirement
9 to 10	A student must earn a minimum of 5 high school credits to promote to grade 10
10 to 11	A student must earn a minimum of 10 high school credits to promote to grade 11
11 to 12	A student must earn a minimum of 16 high school credits to promote to grade 12

All high school credits earned in middle school apply toward the student's promotion requirements.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 3420-R Student Promotion and Accountability](#).

SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Guilford County Schools' Exceptional Children Services works as a collaborative team to serve and advocate for students with disabilities through the provision of personalized instruction in the least restrictive environment as outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) document.

Exceptional Children Services, also called special education, is defined as:

- *Specially designed instruction designed to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability*
- *Access to the general curriculum and intervention programs are designed to provide maximum opportunities for instruction in the general education setting*
- *Full continuum of service*
- *Curriculum-driven instruction using the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the North Carolina Extended Content Standards*
- *Related services that include but are not limited to speech, occupational and physical therapy*

If you are concerned that your child may need special services, contact your child's school. [Click here for more information about Services for Exceptional Children in GCS.](#)

[Click here for information about parents' rights and responsibilities in Special Education.](#)

[Click here for resources for parents of Exceptional Children and dispute resolution.](#)

SERVICES FOR ACADEMICALLY & INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED CHILDREN

Guilford County Schools is dedicated to supporting students who need more challenging learning beyond the general curriculum.

- *K-2 Consultative Services:* These services include collaboration and consultation between the AG teacher and general education teacher to identify differentiation strategies best suited to meet the

individual needs of high performing students referred for consultation in reading and math in the general education classroom.

- *Talent Development:* Talent Development services aim to increase Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted identification of students from underrepresented populations in certain priority schools. Participation in our Talent Development services is determined on an annual basis and is dependent upon student performance and scheduling capacity.
- *Elementary Gifted Services:* Formal identification for gifted services begins in the third grade. Gifted instruction provides appropriate extension and enrichment of grade level standards. The units are culturally diverse and infused with future-ready content and skills that address cross-curricular domains.
- *Middle School Gifted Services:* In the middle grades, academically gifted services consist of proper course placement coupled with advocacy for learner needs.
- *High School Gifted Services:* In high school, academically gifted services consist of proper program and course placement coupled with advocacy for learner needs. GCS also provides targeted information sessions for families and students regarding enrichment and college readiness opportunities appropriate for advanced learners (i.e., NC Governor's School).

Parents will be kept informed about assessments and services as appropriate for their child. [Click here for more information about Academically and Intellectually Gifted Services in GCS.](#)

TESTING

WHAT TO EXPECT

Assessment is an important part of the learning process. In GCS, your child will experience some kind of “test” of how their learning is progressing nearly every day. Some of these assessments look like an assignment provided by the teacher, a quest in a digital learning app or an exit ticket. Others are teacher-created quizzes, projects, and traditional tests. Our teachers use these to adjust their instruction so that every child gets what they need.

Districtwide and statewide assessments are also a critical component of the learning program. These tests are used to measure students’ needs for targeted supports (like gifted instruction), how students are doing compared with their peers, how the district may need to support teachers and schools differently, and to measure at the end of the year whether students are on track.

LIST OF DISTRICT & STATE ASSESSMENTS FOR 2024-25

Below are some examples of the districtwide and statewide assessments you may hear your child is participating in this year.

- DIBELS (grades K-3)
- NWEA MAP (grades K-10)
- WIDA Screener and WIDA ACCESS (multilingual students - grades K-12)
- Learning Snapshots & Interim Assessments (grades 3-12)
- North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests (grades 3-8)

- North Carolina End-of-Course Tests (grades 7-12)
- GCS Final Exams (grades 6-12)
- Pre-ACT & ACT (grades 9-11)
- Pre-SAT & SAT (grades 9-12)
- Advanced Placement (AP) & International Baccalaureate (IB) (grades 9-12)

[Click here for more information about assessments in GCS and the 2024-25 Testing Calendar.](#)

GRADUATION

POLICY SUMMARY

In GCS, all students should graduate prepared for success in higher education and the career of their choice. Students must meet the course unit requirements of the state of North Carolina and complete a Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) course to qualify to graduate. There are limited exceptions in certain circumstances where a student has moved from another state.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3460 Graduation Requirements](#).

OVERVIEW OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The year a student enters 9th grade for the first time determines the requirements they will meet to earn a diploma. To graduate and participate in graduation exercises, students must complete the Future Ready course of study outlined in the table below except for a small number of students with disabilities who qualify for the Occupational Course of Study or certificate of completion. [For more details, see Administrative Regulation 3460-R Graduation Requirements.](#)

Future Ready Core – Students Entering Grade 9 in 2021-22 and beyond		
<i>Subject Area</i>	<i>Required Units</i>	<i>Specific Course Requirements</i>
English	4	English I, English II, English III, and English IV
Mathematics	4	NC Math 1, 2, and 3 and a fourth mathematics course to be aligned with the student's post high school plans. In the rare instance a principal exempts a student from the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence, except as limited by N.C.G.S. §115C-81(b) , the student will be required to pass: NC Math 1 and NC Math 2 plus two additional courses identified on the NC DPI Math options chart.
Science	3	One unit each in: Earth/Environmental sciences, physical sciences, Biology
Social Studies	4	Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy, Economics and Personal Finance, American History, World History
Health and Physical Education	1	In addition to one unit in Health and PE, students must successfully complete cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction

Future Ready Core – Students Entering Grade 9 in 2021-22 and beyond		
<i>Subject Area</i>	<i>Required Units</i>	<i>Specific Course Requirements</i>
Elective Concentrations	6	<u>2 elective credits</u> of any combination from either Career and Technical Education (CTE), Arts Education, or World Languages, <u>PLUS 4 elective credits</u> from one of the following (four-course concentration strongly recommended): CTE, Arts Education, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, World Languages, College Courses, JROTC, and any other subject area or cross-disciplinary courses

EARLY GRADUATION

Families may request a conference with the school counselor to review a student's transcript, eligibility for early graduation, and post-secondary options available to early graduates. Students who have completed all graduation requirements including specific course and testing requirements, an appropriate course of study, and total number of graduation credits required, may request to graduate early, either at mid-year of their senior year or at the end of their junior year. The student's grade classification will be based on the GCS high school promotion standards. Diplomas are awarded only at the end of the school year. Contact your child's school counselor for more information.

ARTS REQUIREMENT (GRADE 6-12)

North Carolina requires that students complete at least ONE course in the arts in grades 6 through 12 to earn a diploma. The one arts credit may be earned by taking music, visual art, theatre or dance.

FIELD TRIPS

POLICY SUMMARY

Learning happens all around us! Your child's teacher or activity sponsor may occasionally plan activities off campus to enrich the learning experience.

- *Planning: Field trips should be well-planned, safe, and related to classroom instruction. They should provide meaningful experiences that can't be had in school.*
- *Special Needs: Arrangements will be made for students with special needs. This includes checking if the destination can accommodate them and arranging specialized transportation.*
- *Approval: The principal approves most field trips. For overnight or out-of-state trips, the Superintendent's approval is needed at least one month in advance.*
- *Supervision: At least two adults, which can include parents, are required per class for a trip. To volunteer as a chaperone, parents must register and complete a GCS volunteer background check.*

- *Permission: Students need written permission from their parent to go on each specific field trip or off-campus activity. An alternate activity will be provided for students without parental permission, and students' grades won't be lowered if parents don't consent to a field trip.*
- *Medications: Medications taken by a student during the school day should also be administered during a field trip according to medication protocols.*
- *Student Conduct: School rules apply during field trips.*
- *Absences and Make-Up Work: Field trip participation is considered part of the instructional program, and students will be counted present. Students can make up any work they miss in other classes.*
- *Cancellation: Trips can be cancelled or postponed by the Superintendent due to emergencies or hazardous conditions.*
- *Fees: The school may ask parents/caregivers to contribute to cover the actual cost of a field trip; however, no student should miss out on a field trip because they can't afford it.*

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 3320-R Field Trips](#).

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

The Guilford County Board of Education encourages students to participate in extracurricular activities and sports, which promote accomplishment, leadership, sportsmanship, self-discipline, teamwork, and physical fitness.

Participation in school extracurricular activities is a privilege, and students are expected to behave appropriately. Misconduct may result in this privilege being revoked.

Students who are absent or suspended may not participate in meetings, practices or competitions on days they are absent from school, unless the absence was planned in advance with the school (like a funeral or a doctor's appointment) and the student is not ill.

Students are required to travel to and from events with the group or team, unless given permission to do otherwise.

For more details, see [Board Policy 3620 Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities](#). Contact your child's school for information about offered activities.

ATHLETICS

Guilford County Schools offers [an interscholastic sports program at both middle and high schools](#). Competitive interscholastic athletics are a great way for students to learn teamwork, self-discipline, and physical fitness. GCS athletics programs also have high standards for academic excellence and attendance for our scholar-athletes.

To participate in sports, students must meet certain standards:

- *Medical examination: Student athletes must have an exam by a licensed provider once every 395 days.*
- *Athletic fees: [A \\$45 annual fee is required to assist with the costs associated with athletics.](#) Families who cannot afford the fee may request a waiver.*
- *Academic Performance: Students must meet [minimum grade and course requirements each semester for middle school or high school](#) to be eligible.*
- *Attendance: Students must attend school 85% of the time in the previous semester. This means they cannot miss more than 13 days in a typical 90-day semester.*
- *Conduct: Students must behave appropriately, represent the school well, and comply with all school rules.*
- *Base School Assignment: Middle school students participate at the school where they are enrolled. For high school, each student is assigned a “base” school when they enter 9th grade. If they switch schools, they must wait 365 days before they can participate in sports at the new school.*

If a student becomes ineligible, they or their school can request a hardship exception. If a student is found to be ineligible after participating in a sport, they will be removed from the team, and the team may have to forfeit any contests in which the student participated. If you have any questions, [please contact the school athletic director](#).

For more details, see Board Policy 3621 [Student Participation in Interscholastic Athletics](#) and [Administrative Regulation 3621-R](#).

[Click here for more information about athletics eligibility, fees, and transfers.](#)

HEAT

In addition to encouraging students to stay hydrated and take breaks, GCS follows [warm weather guidelines](#) to keep our students, activity sponsors and coaches safe.

OUTDOOR TEMPERATURE*

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

LESS THAN 80	Unlimited activity with primary cautions for new or unconditioned athletes or extreme exertion; schedule mandatory rest / water breaks (5 min water / rest break every 30 min)
80-84.9	Normal practice for athletes; closely monitor new or unconditioned athletes and all athletes during extreme exertion. Schedule mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 25 min)
85-87.9	New or unconditioned athletes should have reduced intensity practice and modifications in clothing. Well-conditioned athletes should have more frequent

OUTDOOR TEMPERATURE*

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

	rest breaks and hydration as well as cautious monitoring for symptoms of heat illness. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 20 min) Have cold or ice immersion pool on site for games and practices.
88-89.9	All athletes must be under constant observation and supervision. Remove pads and equipment. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 15 min) Have cold or ice immersion pool on site for games and practices.
90 OR ABOVE	Suspend Practice

* GCS works with the [National Weather Service](#) to use the official [Wet Bulb Globe Temperature \(WBGT\)](#) to make calls regarding outdoor activities.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS & SAFETY

GCS follows strict safety protocols to reduce the chances that a student will experience a head injury and to follow emergency established procedures to respond when a head injury is suspected. As a parent, you can expect that:

- *Schools will provide information to parents, athletes, and coaches about concussions.*
- *Appropriate, well-fitted protective equipment will be worn when students are participating, per the guidelines for each sport.*
- *An established return to play (RTP) protocol will be used in all cases involving a concussion.*
- *Schools will have an emergency action plan.*

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 4270/6145-R Concussion Awareness and Safety](#).

STUDENT INSURANCE

The Guilford County Board of Education offers voluntary student accident insurance to each student each year. [All enrollment information can be found on the GCS website](#). Several options are offered, and a family may enroll throughout the school year. Enrollment forms can be requested from the schools for parents/guardians who do not have access to online enrollment. Parents are encouraged to review the voluntary accident insurance plans each year.

Athletic accident insurance is provided at no cost to students or parents for each student participating on a school-sponsored team. This coverage is only effective when participating in practice, an event, or traveling directly to and from an event. No accident coverage is provided for any accident outside the school-sponsored team. Physical education classes and recess are not covered.

For more details, see [Board Policy 4220 Student Insurance](#).

[Click here for online student accident insurance enrollment.](#)

SUMMER PROGRAMS

GCS offers a range of summer programs from traditional summer school programs to help students who need help recover learning from the school year to acceleration programs and enrichment. You can expect details about 2025 summer programs to be available in April of 2025. [Click here for more information about GCS summer programming.](#)

GCS STUDENT SERVICES

A benefit of our large system is that GCS can offer a wide variety of supportive services for students and their families to assist students to succeed in learning and to graduate on time, ready for higher education and the career of their choice.

[Click here for details about Student Safety, Health, and Wellness.](#)

ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

504 PLANS

Students who need accommodations for a diagnosed medical condition to access learning at school, but who do not require specialized education services, may qualify for a 504 plan. A 504 plan provides support for a student with a condition that makes it challenging for them to participate in the typical grade-appropriate learning process. Examples of impairments for which a 504 might help are: allergies, chronic asthma, diabetes, ADD/ADHD, a temporary disability like a broken leg, or a mental health condition.

If you believe your child may need support to participate in the learning process, contact your child's teacher and the school's 504 coordinator.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Students with specific, diagnosed disabilities who need special education services may qualify for an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP includes learning goals, modifications, progress monitoring plan, and any needed related services.

If you believe your child may have a specific disability requiring specialized instruction to be able to access and progress in their learning, contact your child's teacher and the school's Exceptional Children lead teacher.

[Click here for information about parents' rights and responsibilities in Special Education.](#)

[Click here for resources for parents of Exceptional Children and dispute resolution.](#)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

FAMILIES WHO MOVE DURING THE YEAR

Students whose address changes from one school attendance area to another within the district during the same school year may choose to complete that school year in the same school or attend school in the area to which they have moved.

If families elect to remain in the first school for the remainder of the year, the student shall be required to attend the school according to the area in which they live at the beginning of the next school year. If the criteria in [Board Policy 4150 School Assignment](#) are met, families may request reassignment to remain through the highest grade of the school.

FAMILIES WHO ELECT TO REMAIN IN THE FIRST SCHOOL SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL.

[Click here for more information from the Student Assignment Department.](#)

SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS

CHOICE SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS

It is never too early to start planning if you are interested in a GCS choice school or program for your student. GCS gives families the power of choice to find the best fit for their child's unique needs and interests.

FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR, THE CHOICE APPLICATION WINDOW WILL OCCUR IN FALL 2024. [See 2025-26 Choice Application Window.](#)

Stay tuned for more details, and [click here to learn more about Choice Schools and Programs in GCS.](#)

DRIVER EDUCATION & DRIVER'S LICENSES

WHAT TO EXPECT

GCS provides driver's education through the North Carolina Driving School to eligible students outside the school day. Students must be at least 14 1/2 years of age on the day the class begins. Students must complete Driver's Education and meet academic eligibility requirements to qualify for a driver's permit or license. State law also says that students who do not maintain academic progress, students who drop out, and/or who are suspended for more than 10 days for offenses related to substance abuse, weapons possession or assaulting a school employee may have their driving permit/license suspended.

[Click here for more information about Driver's Education in GCS.](#)

GCS FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The relationship between the school and the family is a critical factor in student success. Your child's school is expected to engage you in your student's schooling, and GCS provides a lot of resources to help with learning at home.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education encourages parents to be involved in their children's education.

- *Parental Involvement Plans: Schools will develop plans to enhance parental involvement. These plans will promote communication, responsible parenting, parent participation in learning and decision-making, and collaboration with community resources.*
- *Communication and Participation: Regular contact with parents is encouraged for information sharing, commendation of students, and notification of concerns. Parents are welcome to visit schools and participate in school volunteer programs.*
- *Parental Notification: Parents will be notified of their rights and other required information regarding school programs. They can opt out of certain programs or activities.*
- *Parental Permission: Written parental permission is required for certain activities, such as administration of medications, off-campus trips, and participation in high-risk sports or activities.*
- *Parental Involvement in Student Health: Parents will be notified of each health care service offered at their children's schools and the means for parents to provide consent for any specific services.*
- *Parental Requests for Information: Parents can request information they have the right to access. The principal must respond within 10 business days or provide an extension notice.*

YOU play a critical role in the education of their children and in the schools. Your involvement is highly encouraged and appreciated.

For more details, see [Board Policy 1310/4002 Parental Involvement & Empowerment](#).

TITLE I FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Schools with high numbers of students from low-income families get extra resources through a federal program called "Title I" to support family engagement. A portion of the Title I federal funds the district receives is spent on family engagement each year.

The Guilford County Board of Education's Title I Parent and Family Engagement policy encourages parents and family members to be involved in their children's education. Here is what you can expect:

- *Parent and Family Engagement: Parents and family members are encouraged to participate in regular, two-way communication involving student learning and other school activities. This includes assisting their child's learning, being actively involved in their child's education at school, and participating in decision making and advisory committees.*
- *Title I Program: This federally supported program offers assistance to educationally and economically disadvantaged children. It provides instructional activities and supportive services to eligible students beyond those provided by the regular school program.*
- *Annual Meeting and Program Evaluation: Each year, parents of students participating in Title I programs are invited to a meeting to discuss the programs and activities, and to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Title I programs and the parent and family engagement policies and plans.*
- *Parent and Family Engagement Efforts: The Board believes that the involvement of parents and family members in the design and implementation of the Title I program will increase its effectiveness. The Title I staff and all District personnel will conduct outreach to parents and family members and involve them in activities throughout the school year.*
- *Notice Requirements: District officials and Title I school personnel provide effective notice of various information as required by law. This includes information about the Program for English Learners, District Report Card, Teacher Qualifications, Student's Academic Growth and Achievement, and Parental Rights and Opportunities for Involvement.*
- *Website Distribution of Information: Each year, District officials publicize on the District website and, where practicable, on the website of each school, the report card and information on each assessment required by the state and, where feasible, by the District.*

For more details, see [Board Policy 1320/3560 Title I Parent and Family Engagement](#) and [Administrative Regulation 1320/3560-R](#).

GUILFORD PARENT ACADEMY

For over a decade, Guilford Parent Academy, the GCS Department charged with supporting effective family engagement across the district, has offered free year-round programming to support families.

[Click here to access free online resources and the schedule of upcoming events.](#)

PARENTS & CAREGIVERS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

[Click here for more information about parents' rights and responsibilities in Special Education.](#)

NORTH CAROLINA PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

PARENTS' RIGHTS FOR THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.25, the district is required to display on the GCS website the following parental legal rights with regard to their child's education:

1. The right to consent or withhold consent for participation in reproductive health and safety education programs, consistent with the requirements of N.C.G.S. § 115C-81.30 and [Board Policy 3540](#).
2. The right to seek a medical or religious exemption from immunization requirements, consistent with the requirements of N.C.G.S. §§ G.S. 130A-156 and 130A-157.
3. The right to review statewide standardized assessment results as part of the State report card.
4. The right to request an evaluation of their child for an academically or intellectually gifted program, or for identification as a child with a disability, as provided in Article 9 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.
5. The right to inspect and purchase public school unit textbooks and other supplementary instructional materials, as provided in Part 3 of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.
6. The right to access information relating to the Board's policies for promotion or retention, including high school graduation requirements.
7. The right to receive student report cards on a regular basis that clearly depict and grade the student's academic performance in each class or course, the student's conduct, and the student's attendance.
8. The right to access information relating to the State public education system, State standards, report card requirements, attendance requirements, and textbook requirements.
9. The right to participate in parent-teacher organizations.
10. The right to opt-in to certain data collection for their child, as provided in N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.65 and [Board Policy 1311/4003](#).
11. The right for students to participate in protected student information surveys only with parental consent, as provided in N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.65 and Board policy [Board Policy 1311/4003](#).
12. The right to review all available records of materials their child has borrowed from a school library.

[Click here to report a concern about a specific procedure or practice that you believe violates Part 4 of Article 7B of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.](#)

PARENTAL RIGHTS RELATED TO STUDENT INFORMATION & SURVEYS

All students may participate in the following activities unless their parent/caregiver notifies the school of their desire to opt out of a particular activity. If you do not want your child to participate in one or more of the following activities, you must notify the school in writing.

1. release of student directory information about your child for school purposes or to outside organizations (see policy [4700](#), Student Records);
2. Release of your child's name, address, and telephone listing to military recruiters or institutions of higher education (see policy [4700](#), Student Records);
3. your child's participation in curricula related to (a) prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; (b) avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy; or (c) reproductive health and safety education, as provided in policy [3540](#), Comprehensive Health Education Program. A copy of the materials that will be used in these curricula will be available in the school media center during the school year and at other times that the media center is available to the public. To meet any review periods required by law, materials also may be made available for review in the central office;

4. your child's participation in academic or career guidance or personal or social counseling services of a generic nature offered to groups of students (e.g., peer relations strategies offered to all sixth graders);
5. your child's participation in any protected information survey given as part of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey;
6. the collection, disclosure, or use of your child's personal information for marketing purposes; and
7. release of your child's free and reduced-price meal information to State Medicaid or State children's health insurance program (SCHIP) unless authorized or required by law.

Written parental permission is REQUIRED prior to the following activities. If you would like your child to participate, you must provide consent.

1. the administration of medications to your student by employees of the school system (see policy [6125](#), Administration of Medications to Students);
2. the release of student records that are not considered directory information, unless the release is allowed or required by law (see policy [4700](#), Student Records);
3. off-campus trips;
4. students' participation in high-impact or high-risk sports or extracurricular activities, such as football, wrestling or mountain climbing (see policy [4220](#), Student Insurance Program);
5. all decisions or actions as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with regard to providing special education or related services to students with disabilities;
6. certain health services, as required by law;
7. participation in a mental health assessment or mental health services as required by law, including but not limited to recurring individualized counseling sessions with a school counselor or other licensed school mental health provider;
8. your students' participation in programs or services that provide information about where to obtain contraceptives or abortion referral services;
9. your students' participation in surveys that are conducted concerning protected topics other than those given as part of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System or National Youth Tobacco Survey; and
10. disclosure of your students' free and reduced-price lunch eligibility information or eligibility status.

For more details, see [Board Policy 1311-4003 Parental Notification – Withholding Consent](#). See below for details about opting out of [sharing information with military recruiters](#) and opting out of [allowing photos or videos of your child to be shared](#) by the school.

VISITING & VOLUNTEERING

POLICY SUMMARIES

VISITORS TO SCHOOLS

The Guilford County Board of Education encourages parents and community members to participate in school activities, observe educational programs, use school facilities, and attend public events. However, to ensure a safe and orderly environment:

- *All visitors must immediately report to the school's administrative office for permission to be in the school.*

- *School personnel must direct any unauthorized individuals to the office or notify the principal.*
- *Students should inform a staff member of any unusual or suspicious behavior that may endanger safety.*
- *Visitors should not distract teachers or interrupt the instructional process.*
- *Spectators at public events should conduct themselves in a manner that models good sportsmanship and citizenship.*

These rules help minimize disruptions and distractions, ensuring a positive learning environment for all students.

For more details, see [Board Policy 5020 Visitors and School-Sponsored Activities](#).

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The Guilford County Board of Education appreciates the contributions of school volunteers, including parents, community members, and local businesses. These volunteers enhance instructional programs and support educational success. Parents can take four hours of unpaid leave from their jobs annually to volunteer, as per North Carolina General Statute 95-28.3. The board encourages schools to use volunteers and provides guidelines:

- Volunteers are screened based on their contact level with students.
- A criminal records check is conducted as per policy/procedure.
- Volunteers are supervised, with the level of supervision based on their contact with students.
- Schools provide training to volunteers, including familiarization with laws, policies, procedures, and rules.

Volunteers are expected to be professional, dependable, and adhere to all applicable laws, policies, procedures, and the district Code of Ethics.

For more details, see [Board Policy 5015 School Volunteers](#).

[Click here to get information about becoming a volunteer in GCS and to register!](#)

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

Parents, caregivers or other visitors to schools who are registered sex offenders are required to notify the Principal of the school and to receive written approval prior to accessing the campus.

For more details, see [Board Policy 5022 Registered Sex Offenders](#) and [Administrative Regulation 5022-R](#).

ATTENDING SCHOOL EVENTS

Spectators shall not:

- *Harass, degrade or heckle players, participants or referees;*
- *Throw anything on the playing surface; and*
- *Approach the coach of either team before, during or after the game unless invited by the coach to do so.*
- *Student spectators who violate this policy are also in violation of the Code of Conduct and will be disciplined accordingly*

Any visitor to a school or school event who violates this policy will be asked to leave and may lose the privilege of coming on campus and/or attending school events in the future.

For more details, see [Board Policy 5020 Visitors and School-Sponsored Activities](#).

CLEAR BAG EVENT PROCEDURE

The safety of our students, staff, and fans is a top priority. Guilford County Schools is constantly enhancing emergency and safety protocols through ongoing collaboration and partnership with law enforcement agencies, community partners and other urban school districts.

Fans are only permitted to bring clear bags to GCS athletics events. You are permitted to bring:

- *Clear plastic or vinyl bags that are no larger than 12" x 6" x 12"*
- *One gallon-sized clear plastic storage bag*
- *Small, clutch bags that are no larger than 4.5" x 6.5"*

[Click here for more information about the GCS clear bag procedure, event safety and security.](#)

GCS STUDENT RECORDS & NOTICES

STUDENT RECORDS

POLICY SUMMARY

GCS maintains official records and data related to students as required by law. GCS follows all applicable state and federal laws regarding the confidentiality and safeguarding of student information and to allow access to student records as appropriate for educational and other designated purposes.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 4700-R Student Records](#).

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Guilford County Board of Education has designated the following items as directory information. Directory information may be disclosed upon request unless the parent/guardian has informed the child's school in writing that no directory information should be disclosed.

- *student's name*
- *major course of study*
- *date and place of birth*
- *participation in officially recognized activities and sports*
- *weight and height of members of athletic teams*
- *dates of attendance (date of enrollment through date of withdrawal or graduation)*
- *degrees and awards received*
- *date of graduation*
- *most recent previous educational agency or institution attended*

The Guilford County Board of Education does not designate a student's home address, telephone number, e-mail address or parents' names as directory information.

Parents/guardians or eligible students may refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the categories of personally identifiable information as directory information. The parent/guardian or eligible student must inform the Guilford County School District in writing within thirty days of the opening of school each year that such personally identifiable information is not to be designated as directory information and should not be released without their prior consent. If a parent/guardian or eligible student waits until after this period has elapsed, the Guilford County Schools will honor such requests for future disclosures.

RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Directory information may be released upon request to organizations or persons fostering the educational purpose of the district. This includes accredited post-secondary educational institutions, various branches of the armed forces, non-profit and/or business organizations that have been approved by the district, or to requesters planning class reunions or alumni activities. No directory or other student information will be released for marketing or sales purposes.

The following individuals, institutions and/or agencies may access non-directory information without parental/guardian or eligible student consent for disclosure:

- a) school officials with legitimate educational interests in the records
- b) officials of a school to which the student is transferring
- c) federal/state educational officials
- d) educational institutions inquiring about the student's application for financial aid
- e) state/local officials to whom disclosure is required by state law and in accordance with federal law
- f) organizations conducting studies for testing or improving instruction

- g) accrediting organizations
- h) parents of a dependent student

Non-directory information is also shared without parental consent in response to health or safety emergencies.

Written or electronic consent of the parent, caregiver, or eligible student must be presented for the release of student information to any individual, agency, or organization not included in the above list of authorized disclosures.

- If you would like for GCS to release your student's educational records to a healthcare provider, please complete [Authorization for the Disclosure of Student's Educational Records to Health Providers](#). This form does not allow GCS to receive your student's medical records. If you would like for GCS to receive your student's medical records from their healthcare providers, please complete [Authorization for the Disclosure of Student's Health Information to the Guilford County Schools](#).
- If you would like for GCS to release your student's educational records to another individual, agency, or organization not included in the above list of authorized disclosures, and that is not a healthcare provider, please complete [Authorization for the Disclosure of Student's Educational Records and Information](#).

CHALLENGING STUDENT RECORDS

Parents or guardians, and students over 18, can challenge the content of a student's cumulative record. This process excludes challenging teacher's grades, except for accuracy. Here's how it works:

- A written request to amend the records must be made within ten days of inspecting the record.
- Within five school days of receiving the request, the principal will schedule a meeting to review the contested data.
- If the data is found to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, it will be removed.
- If the challenge is not justified, the data stays in the record. The requester can then ask for a hearing before the Superintendent's designee.
- If a hearing is requested, it will be scheduled within ten school days. The requester will get at least two school days' notice.
- The requester can bring an attorney or anyone else to the hearing, at their own expense.
- The hearing officer will give a written decision within five school days of the hearing.
- If the officer decides the information is not inaccurate or misleading, the requester can submit a statement explaining their objections. This will be added to the student's record.
- Time limits for challenges to records can be waived or extended by mutual consent.

EXPUNGEMENT OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION RECORDS

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-402, a parent/guardian or student age 16 or older may submit a request to have records of long-term suspensions removed from their record if all the following criteria are met:

- *The student has either graduated from high school or has not been expelled or suspended again during the two-year period beginning on the date of the student's return to school after the suspension or expulsion.*
- *The Superintendent's designee determines the record of the long-term suspension or expulsion is no longer needed to maintain a safe and orderly school environment.*
- *The Superintendent's designee determines the record of the long-term suspension or expulsion is no longer needed to adequately serve the student.*

[Click here to access the form to request an expungement.](#) The Superintendent's designee will provide a decision in writing within 10 school days of a request. The district may expunge any record of a long-term suspension that meets the criteria above at its discretion.

CHANGES TO CUSTODY OR GUARDIANSHIP

KEEP YOUR RECORDS CURRENT

You must update the school *immediately* if there are any legal agreements or court orders documenting changes to custody arrangements or guardianship of your child. Please provide a copy of custody agreements, legal guardianships, temporary protective orders or other documents that alter the persons or the rights of the persons who have physical custody and/or rights to access your child and their records.

Unless the school has a court order or legal agreement on file explicitly indicating otherwise, legal parents/guardians of a student are allowed to pick them up, to designate emergency contacts, to access their records, and to make decisions about their health, education and welfare.

School officials will follow the child's official school records when determining to whom a student or their information may be released. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to resolve any disputes in an appropriate manner outside the school setting.

MILITARY RECRUITMENT

Federal law requires that the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction provide military recruiters with a list of high school students' names, addresses and telephone listings after the 30th day of school. These are to be used for recruiting purposes and for informing young people of scholarship opportunities. Parents/guardians and students have the option of requesting that the student's name, address and telephone number not be shared with military recruiters. Any requests received after the 30th day of school will be honored for future disclosures.

[Click here for the Military Recruitment Opt-Out Form.](#)

MEDIA RELEASE

At various times during the school year, school representatives, Guilford County Schools (GCS), partners/vendors of GCS and a variety of media outlets request permission to film, video tape and photograph our schools. They subsequently publish, broadcast or use these materials, which often include images and depictions of students, as well as student work products.

If you wish to opt out of allowing your child's likeness or work products to be used/featured by your school, GCS/its partners or electronic or social media, please inform the school in writing by the 30th day of school. Any requests received after the 30th day of school will be honored for future disclosures.

[Click here for the Photo Sharing Opt-Out Form.](#)

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS & CONCERNS

GCS is committed to providing effective ways for parents, caregivers and students to voice concerns and complaints. For most concerns, complaints should be received and addressed directly with the employee responsible. The District also makes available [the Let's Talk system](#) to provide parents/caregivers, students, and community members with a way to informally ask questions and resolve concerns.

Some issues of particular concern have specific processes to ensure that appropriate procedural safeguards and protections are in place, including the following:

1. A process to resolve concerns about procedures and practices related to student health (see Policy [1310/4002](#) Parental Involvement and Empowerment)
2. Public hearings and public comments at board meetings on subjects of concern to parents and the community (See Policy 2310 Public Participation in Board Meetings)
3. A procedure to address parental concerns regarding the curriculum (See Policy [3200](#) Selection of Instructional Materials)
4. Specific processes for addressing disciplinary consequences (See Policy [4300](#) Student Discipline)
5. Complaints of matters related to student assignment (See Policy [4150](#) Student Assignment)
6. Processes as provided by law for students with disabilities (See Policy [1730/4022/7231](#), Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities)
7. Processes to address claims of discrimination, harassment, bullying or retaliation (See Policy [1710/4021/7230](#), Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying)
8. A procedure to resolve concerns about misconduct on the basis of sex or gender (See [1725/4035/7236](#), Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex)

STUDENT & PARENT COMPLAINTS

POLICY SUMMARY

The Guilford County Board of Education has a policy for handling complaints and grievances from students and parents.

- A **grievance** is a formal written complaint by a student or parent that alleges a violation of a specific law or policy.
- The Board encourages everyone to try to resolve grievances informally and at the most immediate administrative level.
- If needed, there's a formal process to resolve grievances. This process is private and confidential.
- Students or parents involved in a grievance process can have a third party represent them. This person should act with courtesy and follow the rules for grievances.
- No one will be retaliated against for participating in a grievance.

This policy is for situations not covered by other board policies. If you're not sure which policy applies to your concern, you should contact the principal or Superintendent or designee. They can help you understand the correct policies and procedures.

For more details, see [Board Policy 1740/4010 Student/Parent Complaints and Grievances](#).

REPORTING & RESOLUTION PROCESS

The grievance process is a positive way for parents, students, and school officials to improve relationships and communication. It's a way to solve disputes in an orderly and fair way. Here's how it works:

- *Step One: A student or parent can submit a written grievance within 15 days of the event that caused the grievance. The Deputy Superintendent will review it and decide if it meets the definition of a grievance.*
- *Step Two: If the person who made the grievance isn't happy with the response at Step One, they can request mediation within 5 days. The Deputy Superintendent can decide if mediation will help.*
- *Step Three: If mediation doesn't work, the person can appeal to the Deputy Superintendent within 5 days. The Superintendent or a chosen person will review all the information and make a final decision.*
- *Step Four: If the person isn't happy with the decision at Step Three, they can appeal to the Board within 5 days.*

During this process, everyone involved can have a representative. All meetings and hearings are private and confidential. The focus is on finding solutions, not punishing anyone. No one will be treated badly for using the grievance process.

For more details, see [Administrative Regulation 1740/4010-R Student Parent Grievance Process](#).

FILE A COMPLAINT

If you are concerned that a specific law or policy has not been followed in GCS, contact [your school's principal](#) or [the principal supervisor](#).

VERSION HISTORY

When this handbook is updated, the version number will be changed and documentation about the changes noted in the table below.

Version number	Date issued	Changes
1.0	8/1/2024	Original document for 2024-25



In compliance with federal law, Guilford County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. Refer to the Guilford County Board of Education's Discrimination Free Environment Policy AC for a complete statement. Inquiries or complaints should be directed to the Guilford County Schools Compliance Officer, 120 Franklin Boulevard, Greensboro, NC 27401; 336-370-8154.

All Guilford County Schools facilities, both educational and athletic, are tobacco-free learning environments.

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